

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-07  
L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02  
USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 MCE-00 OMB-01 /079 W  
-----029508 132134Z /41

R 131717Z DEC 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3701  
SECDEF WASHDC  
INFO USMISSION USNATO  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 18535

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, BE  
SUBJECT: BELGIAN HAWK

REF: STATE 289234

1. IN A FOLLOWUP TO DELIVERY OF SECDEF BROWN'S LETTER TO MOD VANDEN BOEYNANTS (REFTEL), WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY THE MEMBER OF VANDEN BOEYNANTS' CABINET WHO FOLLOWS HAWK (COLONEL GILBERT DUPONT) THAT THE MINISTER EXPECTS THE USG TO FOLLOW UP ON SECRETARY BROWN'S OFFER TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT.

2. COMMENT: NEITHER EMBASSY NOR USNATO, WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED ISSUE, IS BEST PLACED TO IDENTIFY THOSE AREAS IN WHICH GOB MIGHT BE MOST COMPETITIVE TO MAKE TENDERS FOR POSSIBLE DOD PURCHASES OF BELGIAN-PRODUCED DEFENSE ITEMS ON A PARITY WITH THE TENDERS OF US FIRMS. WE RECOMMEND THAT THIS AS WELL AS THE MECHANICS FOR RECEIVING SUCH BELGIAN TENDERS MIGHT BE AN APPROPRIATE SUBJECT FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH THE BELGIANS EITHER  
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BY CORRESPONDENCE OR BY A VISITING DOD MISSION. END  
COMMENT.

3. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO HELIP, SOCIALIST DEPUTY LOUIS TOBBACK, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES' DEFENSE COMMISSION, HAS PUBLISHED A STRONG ATTACK ON HELIP WHICH WAS WIDELY REPORTED IN THE BELGIAN

PRESS. HIS ATTACK FOCUSED ON (A) THE LACK OF ECONOMIC OFFSET AND (B) ALLEGED TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN HELIP. IN REGARDS TO THE LATTER HE SAID THAT HELIP WOULD IMPROVE HAWK, BUT NOT AT ALTITUDES BELOW 150 METERS WHERE ANY ATTACKERS WOULD PENETRATE WESTERN AIR DEFENSES. HE NOTED THAT THE CRUISE MISSILE WAS DESIGNED BY THE WEST TO OPERATE IN THIS AREA AND THAT THE EAST, IF IT ATTACKED, WOULD ALSO USE ALTITUDES BELOW 150 METERS. HE THUS DREW THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WOULD BE NO "60 KM GAP" IN WESTERN AIR DEFENSES BECAUSE THERE WAS NO WESTERN AIR DEFENSE. TOBBACK WENT ON TO CRITICIZE HAWK'S LACK OF MOBILITY AND SAID THAT HELIP WAS NO IMPROVEMENT OVER HAWK IN THIS REGARD. COMMENT: TOBBACK WAS PRESUMABLY REFERRING TO THE HAWK BELT RATHER THAN TO THE HAWK SYSTEM IN HIS CRITICISM OF ITS IMMOBILITY. END COMMENT.

4. DISCUSSING THE HELIP PROGRAM, THE WIDELY READ AND RESPECTED WRITER ON DEFENSE ISSUES, HERMAN DE WULF WROTE ON DECEMBER 13: "THE TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT IS FIRM: NO PARTICIPATION IN HELIP UNLESS THERE IS 100 PER CENT INDUSTRIAL COMPENSATION. MINISTER VANDEN BOEYNANTS HAS SCRAPED TOGETHER MOOEY FROM THE ARMY, AIR FORCE, NAVY AND MEDICAL SERVICE, GOING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MONEY CHEST, AND HAS THUS COLLECTED 4 BILLION BELGIAN FRANCS. THE MONEY IS THERE. BUT THE GOVERNMENT DEMANDS

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COMPENSATIONS BEFORE IT IS SPENT. IT HAS BECOME AN ARTICLE OF FAITH FOR THE BELGIAN SOCIALISTS. . ."

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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